

FINAL Magnuson Park Advisory Committee Minutes  
Building 30 Lower Conference Room  
April 9, 2014 from 6 – 7:30 PM

Attending: MPAC Members: Julianna Ross (Chair), Ed Bronsdon (Vice-Chair), Peter Zimmerman, Gail Chiarello, Ken Sparks, Tom Kelly, Loren Hill, Aaron Hoard. Absent: Colby Bradley, Herb Curl, Diana Kincaid, Morgan Collins,. Parks staff: Cheryl Fraser, Brian Judd, Joanne Orsucci. Guests: Rusty Williams, Lynn Ferguson, John Wick (Mountaineers), Tahoma Khalsa (an organizer of 5-K and 10-K races), Representative Gerry Pollet.

Chair Julianna Ross called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

Approval of the March Minutes. The March 2014 Minutes were approved.

Public Comment: Rusty Williams spoke to the pending City Council vote to put a Metropolitan Park District on the August 5, 2014 ballot. The plus of a Metropolitan Park District was the amount of money it could generate. The minus was that an MPD would exist solely under the state RCW and once created, could not be “uncreated” by the voters alone. He felt the MPD revenue stream represented a “candy shop” for City Council and the Parks Department. He said that parks levies always pass in Seattle, and he favored another levy.

Apropos of this public comment, Gail Chiarello moved to add a discussion of the MPD as a final item on the MPAC agenda.

Announcement: Lynn Ferguson announced a presentation to be done by Friends of the Naval Air Station at Sand Point to the Parks Board of Commissioners on April 24th at 7PM. Friends is planning a very big celebration/reunion the weekend of September 27-28 at Magnuson Park, commemorating the First Flight Around the World, which took off from Sand Point in 1926.

Joanne Orsucci: Special Events Coordinator. Joanne Orsucci coordinates public events for the entire Parks Department. She reported that she had studied MPAC’s recommendations from a year ago re Special Events at Magnuson Park. Guidelines have emerged from those recommendations which will be implemented not only at Magnuson Park, but parks-wide. These guidelines are up on the web. Some of the guidelines include: (a) that groups larger than 500 must use shuttle buses rather than private autos; (b) Boat ramp areas must be free and clear; (c) Runs must start either by 8:30-9AM or else much later; (d) There would be no closures of NE 74th Street any more. Groups that meet the criteria for City-wide Special Permits must get one, and she hoped her office and the web site would provide “one-stop shopping” for these.

Tom Kelly said he appreciated the improvements. He also asked if allowed noise levels were unlimited once permission to exceed standard noise levels was granted. He said that instruments and other methods of setting incremental levels was available. Joanne said that sound systems must face the water but that announcements to groups of 2000 individuals would of necessity be pretty loud and levels above the trigger point requiring a permit were not set. She also said that sound levels were put in place and technically enforced by DPD but that neither the Parks Department nor DPD has the staff to monitor these sound levels and that equipment for measuring was limited. Tom said that these days anyone with a smart phone can get an application that provides reasonably accurate and objective measure. Lynn Ferguson advised calling the Police Department if noise levels seemed excessive. Joanne responded that the Parks Department was working on a relationship with the North Precinct and was especially trying to educate out-of-town event organizers. Ken Sparks asked that the Northeast District Council be notified at least two months in advance of events that would impact traffic. Joanne responded that the Parks Department maintained an on-line calendar of city-wide special events. Ken Sparks reiterated that Parks had an obligation to notify Karen Ko, the NE

district coordinator, of special events. Joanne responded that a 2-months-out notification could not work because events sometimes cancelled; and in any case, the Department of Neighborhoods is on the Special Events Committee..

Tahoma Khalsa asked if any input had been sought from race organizers or events coordinators. Joanne commented that the average "big group" consisted of about 2500 individuals. Occasionally there were 3000 or more. She produced a map with 6 suggested "runs" or "walks" starting at Fields 10 and 11 and the waterfront. Tom Kelly asked if traffic direction was required to help guide people to parking and prevent jams in the park.. Joanne answered that large groups (greater than 2000) had to have certified flaggers directing traffic. Ed Bronsdon commented that the recent Washington Recreation Parks Association meeting held at Magnuson had worked really well. Joanne said the events staff would be requiring future events to follow the guidelines she had just presented and therefore staff felt that having organizers present to MPAC would be unnecessary and asked for response on that. The group responded that adhering to the guidelines she had just announced seemed sufficient.

Karla Withrow: Summer Camp Program with Jim Brown, President of the Magnuson Community Center, and Mohammed, a teen-age volunteer apprentice with the program. Karla announced that the summer camp was a three-part program which partners with Sail Sand Point, Arena Sports, the Tennis Center, the Mountaineers, the Seattle Musical Theater, and Thistle. The three parts are the children's camp, the teen camp, and the apprentice program. Muhammad spoke of his work with the kids, saying that he lived with them during camp, and they became his brothers and sisters. He thought summer camp was a haven for these kids. He himself was a freshman at Roosevelt High School and a select team soccer player. Jim Brown asked for help in fundraising for the Summer Camp. He said they were \$6,000 short. Lynn Ferguson advised him to address the Northeast District Council, and Tom Kelly suggested that if everyone at the table today ponied up \$200 they'd be halfway to the camp funding goal.

Gary Gibbons, Capital Projects Coordinator, Parks Department. Gary gave a report on work being done on Building 18. The roof is being stabilized only, and some hazard remediation has been done, The windows have been boarded and covered up. The owls are out. This building has not been land marked but is part of the historic Sand Point District. Re Building 2, the old hangar at the north end of the park, the Navy has expanded its radium remediation. "Campus" electrical upgrades by Parks and City Light have activities on the North side of building 2, which reveal a radium issue. All work on Building 2 will be mobilized to west side of roof for now, while Navy and Electrical upgrades progress.\$2.2M has been set aside for Building 2. The north wing of the roof will be replaced; it has been leaking for many years now. The roof will require a quarter-acre of roofing. There are also heating issues. The Conservation Corps is in the building. Problems include molding sheet rock, carpets, walls, acoustic ceiling tiles. The roof is not "tied" to the core of the building. There are drainage issues; water stands in the drains and plugs up. The roof work should be wrapped by August. He commented that the entire structure is land-marked. Ken Sparks commented that Building 2 was built in 1929 and the Parks Department had had it for 15 years and had not done the necessary maintenance. Julianna Ross asked if there was a lot of "cool stuff" in the building. Pete Zimmerman said there were some nice old marble bathroom pieces and old fixtures.

Representative Gerry Pollet asked whether MPAC was aware of the archery proposal for Building 2 which he thought was coming from the Mayor. Gary Gibbons commented any archery activity would have to be confined to the north wing; no other location has code compliance. Pollet asked whether the Navy's remedial work on the radium could include working on the storm drains. Gary Gibbons responded that the expansion to the north and east was unexpected and unknown. Representative Pollet said he had commented on this to the Navy in July, that sealing the pipes may lead to unacceptable radiation exposure for the workers. Gary Gibbons reported the Navy had not been that forthcoming and said this was the first he had learned about contamination on site.

Tom Kelly returned the conversation to Building 18 and said that birders had an interest in the owls returning and wondered if that would be possible. One alternative he's heard has been via a nest box behind one of the upper tower openings such that the box would seal them off from other parts of the tower. Alternately it might be possible to return a tower opening allowing full tower access to allow use of the buoy for nesting again. Gibbons responded that it was still possible to consider this. He also said that the tower window coverings may be used to display art work.

Brian Judd, Magnuson Park Manager's Report: The Tennis Center has agreed to remove the sign which had stated rest rooms were available solely for the use of patrons.

The Mountaineers are erecting "friction slabs" at the north end of the building. Guest John Wick spoke up saying the slab would be 30'x30' and 20' high [NOTE: doesn't make sense], The slab will not have "holds" and will work solely on friction. The Mountaineers have paid for this but it will be available for public use at all times. Lynn Ferguson expressed concern, that changes such as these meant that The Mountaineers building was no longer a contributing building, although at one time it would have been eligible for historic designation. Ken Sparks commented that the Mountaineers "didn't have a clue." Ken went on to build on Lynn Ferguson's announcement of the September celebration of the First Flight Around the World. He said that 50,000 people had turned out in 1924 to watch the plane take off.

Brian Judd announced April 12 was Celebrate Urban Nature Day. Karla Withrow said that MESA, P-Patch, and Audubon were sponsoring this event. Saturday May 10th would be International Bird Migration Day. Dennis Paulsen would be one of the speakers.

Brian announced a hiring update—Isabel Hamilton had retired, and Dan Iverson would be taking her place.

Re Building 11: April 1st Waldorf, and Cascade Bicycle Club, signed their leases.

Reference to the Seattle Fruit Tree Society—they would have an interest in picking up the fruit from the fruit trees on Sportsfield Drive.

Ken Sparks: Naval Air Strip Reunion Update Friends of Magnuson Park are sponsoring the Around-the-World flight commemoration as well as a Sand Point Naval Air Station reunion. The reunion will be held Saturday September 27th, which is also the day the Huskies play Stanford. Thursday and Friday preceding there will be school tours and a tour of the Museum of Flight. Sunday at 1:28PM the around-the-world flight will be commemorated. A Douglas Cruiser will be landing on pontoons, and the Mayor and the Governor will be speaking.

Pete Zimmerman: Building 9 Report: The Committee has met, with Lynn Ferguson and Peter Zimmerman in attendance. Peter found it astonishing that 70% of Children's Hospital Employees and 50% of UW employees made below the median income. There was discussion of low-income definitions. Rep. Gerry Pollet added further updates: The RFPs for the rehabilitation of Building 9 went out April 7th. He asked if MPAC wanted to suggest criteria for the RFP such as a preference for families? a preference for veterans? Parking? The Department of Commerce is seeking ideas from the community on use of the center part of the building and the chapel and so far has heard suggestions for a health clinic, child care. Gail Ch. suggested a library. Ken Sparks stated there could not be a library on Parks property. GC pointed out the property belong to the Department of Commerce now. In fact, it had never been Parks property—it had belonged to the University of Washington. Rep. Pollet said that ideas should be forwarded to Janet Masella at the Department of Commerce. Tom Kelly said that adequate parking will be a challenge and suggested giving preference to people working within areas that could be reached in less than about a 20-minute bike ride or hour's walk from the Building 9. Plotting travel times from Google Earth would show travel times much more accurately than assuming them from drawing a distance circle on a map.

Loren Hill: Circulation Subcommittee The Circulation Subcommittee met at 5PM and will meet again in 2 weeks. Discussion had centered around how to gain Park access using the NOAA Road. Both Tom Kelly and Ed Bronsdon felt that getting NOAA to change its stance would require a “social movement,” by which they meant, some sort of demonstration, or display of political pressure. Loren expressed concerns that the Parks presentation to NOAA was not as professional as it needed to be; he and Brian Judd agrees to work on upgrading the presentation. Some thought SDOT would have to get involved. Ken Sparks stated that communities to the north of Magnuson Park oppose opening the NOAA Road, or opening any third entrance to the park, because there is already so much traffic on Sand Point Way. Loren Hill responded the increased traffic might be mostly bicycle or pedestrian.

Gail Chiarello: Discussion of the Metropolitan Parks District. At about 7:25PM the Chair asked if people were willing to stay a bit overtime to discuss the pending Metropolitan Parks District which had come up in Rusty Williams’ public comments. She asked Gail to lead that discussion. Gail passed out some hand-outs, including a letter to City Council from the Northeast District Council in support of a parks levy and opposing an MPD. On the plus side, an MPD would represent a very stable source of funding and would double the amount of revenue Parks was receiving from its current levy. The nay side is the converse of the pro side. The MPD represents a very stable source of funding because once voters vote it in, they cannot vote it out. Doubling the amount of revenue over the current levy amount actually = doubling the amount of levy property tax Seattle home-owners pay. Moreover, under the MPD, this property tax could be quadrupled, before the MPD would have to ask permission from the voters to go higher. Another concern was the speed by which City Council was processing the MPD legislation, and concern that it was being placed on the August 5th (very low turn-out) primary ballot. After discussion, it was agreed that Julianna would draft a letter to Christopher Williams, and cc City Council members and the Mayor, to the effect that the process was going too quickly, many individuals with deep roots in Parks issues did not understand the MPD, and to request Council to slow its process down and hold a public educational seminar on the MPD. The letter was submitted to an e-mail vote and was send. Copy attached.

Business being concluded, the meeting adjourned at 7:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Chiarello